

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for use by an operator in a cavity of a mammalian body with a scope having a distal face providing a field of view comprising a flexible elongate member having a distal extremity adapted for extending into the cavity and a proximal extremity accessible from  
5 outside of the mammalian body when the distal extremity is disposed in the cavity, an expandable prosthesis, means for releaseably securing the prosthesis to the distal extremity of the flexible elongate member and a visual marker capable of being seen by the operator in the field of view secured to one of the distal extremity of the flexible elongate member and the prosthesis for facilitating placement of the prosthesis in the mammalian body.
- 10 2. The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein the means for releaseably securing includes releasing means operable from the proximal extremity of the flexible elongate member.
3. The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein the means for releaseably securing includes crocheted material extending along at least a portion of the length of the prosthesis.
4. The apparatus of Claim 3 wherein the crocheted material includes a thread having  
15 a plurality of loops extending around the prosthesis.
5. The apparatus of Claim 4 wherein the visual marker is a colored marker looped around the thread and bound to the prosthesis by the thread.
6. The apparatus of Claim 4 wherein the visual marker is an additional thread having tightly spaced loops around a portion of the prosthesis.
- 20 7. The apparatus of Claim 4 wherein a portion of the thread is tightly spaced loops around the prosthesis to form the visual marker.
8. The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein the prosthesis is a stent.
9. The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein the prosthesis has a first length when secured to the flexible elongate member and a second length different from the first length when released  
25 from the flexible elongate member.
10. The apparatus of Claim 9 wherein the prosthesis has opposite first and second ends, the visual marker being secured to one of the distal extremity of the flexible elongate

member and the prosthesis a distance from one of the first and second ends of the prosthesis equal to the second length to facilitate desired placement of the prosthesis in the cavity.

11. The apparatus of Claim 10 wherein the prosthesis foreshortens during release from the flexible elongate member, the second length being shorter than the first length so as to reflect such foreshortening.

12. The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein the visual marker is secured to the prosthesis.

13. The apparatus of Claim 12 wherein the visual marker includes a colored band extending around the prosthesis.

14. The apparatus of Claim 13 wherein the means for releaseably securing includes a thread for crocheting the prosthesis to the distal extremity of the flexible elongate member, the thread being secured to the colored band so that upon pulling the thread to release the prosthesis the colored band is pulled off the prosthesis and onto the flexible elongate member.

15. The apparatus of Claim 12 wherein the visual marker is a colored thread having tightly spaced loops along a portion of the prosthesis.

16. The apparatus of Claim 12 wherein the visual marker is a bioabsorbable material extending around a portion of the prosthesis.

17. The apparatus of Claim 16 wherein the bioabsorbable material is a gelatin.

18. A method for placing a prosthesis mounted on a distal extremity of a flexible elongate member and having a visual marker thereon in an internal cavity formed by a wall of a mammalian body comprising the steps of introducing the distal extremity of the flexible elongate member into the cavity, introducing a scope into the cavity to view the visual marker, moving the flexible elongate member to align the visual marker relative to the wall and releasing the prosthesis from the distal extremity of the flexible elongate member.

19. The method of Claim 18 further comprising the step of removing the visual marker from the prosthesis before the releasing step.

20. The method of Claim 19 wherein the removing step includes the step of waiting a sufficient period of time for the visual marker to dissolve.

21. A method for placing a stent mounted on a distal extremity of a flexible elongate member in an internal passageway formed by a wall of a mammalian body wherein the stent contracts in length when released from the flexible elongate member and has a visual marker thereon to indicate the contracted length of the stent comprising the steps of introducing the distal extremity of the flexible elongate member into the internal passageway, introducing a scope into the cavity to view the visual marker on the stent, moving the flexible elongate member to align the visual marker relative to the wall and releasing the stent from the distal extremity of the flexible elongate member so as to permit the stent to expand in diameter and engage the wall of the internal passageway.

22. The method of Claim 21 wherein the aligning step includes the step of aligning the visual marker with a margin of a stricture in the internal passageway.